



# NATIONAL DISASTER COUNCIL

NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT OFFICE

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## NATIONAL SITUATIONAL REPORT 06

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### A. HIGHLIGHTS

- The Government established Joint Oversight Committee (OSC) for COVID-19 under the Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet mains its role in providing strategic direction.
- Solomon Islands remains under a “**State of Public Emergency**” (SOE) declared by His Excellency, the Governor General. The SOE is further extended for another four months starting from 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020.
- “**Honiara (Alligator Creek to Poha River) declared as the Emergency Zone**” by the Honourable Prime Minister on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020.
- “**Restriction of movement of small craft vessels declared for Solomon Islands Papua New Guinea Boarder**” by the Honourable Prime Minister on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2020 under Emergency Powers (COVID-19) Regulation 2020.
- National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) and Provincial Emergency Operations Centres for all Provinces including Honiara City Municipality remains on “Full-On Activation mode” to support national and provincial coordination.
- National Disaster Operations Sector Committees (N-DOC Sectors) and Provincial Disaster Sector Committee (P-DOC) remains on Full-On Activation Mode.
- Provincial Disaster Committees (PDCs’)/Provincial Disaster Operations Committees (P-DOCs’) on all ten Provinces and Honiara Municipality has step up preparedness for response to COVID-19.
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for lockdown under development by NEOC with support of specific sectors.

### GLOBAL SITUATION IN NUMBERS

The numbers are based on WHO Situation Report-97 as of 26<sup>th</sup> April 2020 (total new cases in the last 24 hours)

#### Globally

2 804 796 confirmed (84 900)  
193 710 deaths (6006)

#### Western Pacific Region

142 693 confirmed (1170)  
5943 deaths (37)

#### Countries/territories/areas affected

210

#### Countries with no Confirm Cases

North Korea, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Lesotho, Comoros, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Samoa, Kiribati, Federated States of Micronesia, Tonga, Marshall Islands, Palau, Tuvalu, Nauru

- As of 19<sup>th</sup> April 2020, the country recorded NO CONFIRMED CASE of COVID-19. This was after the results of the two most recent samples sent on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2020 returned as NEGATIVE.

## **B. CURRENT SITUATION**

Solomon Islands remains COVID-19 FREE as of 19<sup>th</sup> April 2020 after the two last samples sent to the Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratory (VIDRL) in Melbourne, Australia returned as NEGATIVE results. This confirms that of all the 13 samples collected through the COVID-19 Triage at the National Referral Hospital (NRH) have all tested NEGATIVE for COVID-19.

The country has received the COVID-19 testing equipment donated by the People's Republic of China (PRC) for in country testing. The equipment was airlifted into Solomon Islands from Brisbane, Australia.

Given that neighbouring Papua New Guinea (PNG) now has 8 Confirmed Cases of COVID-19, it is a major concern to the Solomon Islands. Recognising the traditional connections and relationships on the Solomon Islands Papua New Guinea Border, particularly in family ties and trade, the border is regarded as a potential high-risk area of possible COVID-19 importation into the country. Thus, the Solomon Islands have taken no chances by stepping border security and surveillance as a preventative measure along the border in ensuring the lives, safety and security of communities living on the border, and broader Solomon Islands is protected.

Additionally, Solomon Islands nationals living in PNG, Fiji and other countries are in communication with the Government for assistance. The requests are currently being discussed and appropriate support is being facilitated through the appropriate Government Agencies and the N-DOC Sector Committees.

The Government remains committed to implementing strict measures to prevent the importation and potential spread of COVID-19 within its borders to protect its people. All overseas passenger flights are currently on hold while essential cargo flights are done on need basis's to support COVID-19 operations. Seaports Honiara and Noro continue to operate with strict measures in place at the Points of Entry.

The declaration of State of Public Emergency on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020 still exists and was further extended on 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 for an additional four months commencing on the same date the declaration was proclaimed by His Excellency, the Governor General. Measures put in place to limit mass gatherings include closure of schools mainly in Honiara City and Guadalcanal Province, temporary halt on recreational activities, scaling down of non-essential public government services and repatriation of city dwellers to home provinces still being enforced. Restriction of movements for small crafts along the Solomon-PNG border and night curfews in Honiara are part of the stringed measures.

On-going issues are the N-DOC Sector Committees planning and implementation of their operational arrangements based on the Preparedness and Response Plan that is informed by SIG's COVID-19 graded response structure for case scenarios. The case scenarios specify actions to be taken for zero up to 5 confirmed cases of COVID-19. N-DOC Sector Committees consist of Health, Camp Management (for managing of Quarantine Sites), Infrastructure, Livelihood, Protection and Education. Similar planning process is now extended to cover Honiara City as well as Guadalcanal, Central, Choiseul and Western Provinces. Guadalcanal Province shares common land boundary with Honiara city with both having many interdependencies of basic services and commercial activities. Provincial planning process on COVID-19 Preparedness and Response also aims to address these issues.

## C. SOLOMON ISLANDS GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

- Oversight Committee established by Cabinet to provide strategic direction on a whole-of-government planning and response to COVID-19 continues to meet on a regular basis to discuss relevant measures.
- Government through the Office of the Prime Minister continues to conduct talk back shows aired on radio, TV and online media outlets. This is to update the country on the current Government responses to the COVID-19.
- The **State of Public Emergency** declared on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020 has extended to another four months as of Wednesday 08<sup>th</sup> April 2020. The four months extension commenced on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020.
- N-DOC Sector Committees are stepping up in their COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plans (PRP) with the focus on broader socio-economic impacts at both the national and provincial levels.
- Budget (\$137.3 million) for implementation of the Preparedness and Response Plan has been allocated to the respective lead ministries of N-DOC Committees (MAL, MEHRD, MHMS, MWYCFA, MID, MPNSCS & MECDM).
- N-DOC Health Sector Committee is leading the health aspect of COVID-19 with broader coordination through the N-DOC.
- N-DOC Camp Management Sector Committee continues to manage all Institutional Quarantine Sites (IQFs). Currently all the IQFs are empty and close, however, in a state of operational readiness should there be need for quarantining.
- National Emergency Response Team (NERT) support to the Guadalcanal Province EOC and Camp Management EOC remains.
- **NERT assigned with Camp Management have been deployed with the Sector Committee to Western and Choiseul Provinces on Monday 27<sup>nd</sup> April to conduct training on running a Quarantine Facility.**
- **Two-day dialogue was held on the 22-23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020 between Provincial Premiers and national government officials in Honiara to update all premiers on the measures currently undertaken to manage risks associated with COVID-19. Presentations were made on the following:**
  - **SOE Declaration and delineation of Honiara and Western Province as emergency zones as well as implications on Provincial Governments' roles/responsibilities**
  - **Economic stimulus package and proposed modalities for implementation**
  - **The National Disaster Management Plan 2018 and its application in COVID-19 including the compounding impacts of TC Harold**
  - **Health, Education, Livelihood and Security perspectives of COVID-19.**
- Consultation meeting with Provincial Disaster Committee (PDC) with the team by the National Security Department conducted on the 15<sup>th</sup> April in Gizo regarding the security assessment in Shortland Islands, and the Solomon Islands maritime border with PNG.
- RSIPF step-up boarder security as part of the Emergency Powers (COVID-19) Regulation 2020 that restricts movement of small crafts on the Solomon Islands-PNG border.
- Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS) commenced delivery of medical supplies to the Provinces (18 pallets shipped to provinces, 7 pallets ready for delivery this week, whilst 3 pallets are still being prepared). Pallets content consists of normal medical supplies of drugs and consumables).
- Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development confirm resumption of classes to begin on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2020 for Forms 3, 5 & 6 in non-emergency zones.
- **Oversight Committee continued with the weekly Sunday Radio Talk Back Show based on the messaging strategy of 'UMI TOGETA AGAINST COVID 19' on 26<sup>th</sup> April. The key issues addressed include the outcomes of dialogue with Provincial Premiers and Honiara City Mayor, Provincial Health Readiness, process towards restarting of schools, PMs main points in his address on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020, clarification on logging and bauxite ships (strengthening**

through up-coming amendment to COVID-19 regulations and a new order on foreign vessels) and responses to questions.

## **D. N-DOC SECTOR COMMITTEE**

### **D1. CAMP MANAGEMENT SECTOR COMMITTEE (Institutional Quarantine Facilities)**

- All Institutional Quarantine Facilities (IQF) in Honiara, particularly, Guadalcanal Beach Resort (GBR), VIMO and National Hosting Authority (NHA) are empty, decontaminated, supplies stocktaking conducted and closed. However, all remains operationally ready should there be any future need for quarantining.
- Camp Management Sector Committee are stepping up its provincial support with a team deployed to Western and Choiseul Provinces to conduct training for the P-DOC Camp Management Sector Committee on managing the Quarantine Facilities (IQFs). Western and Choiseul shares the common maritime border with PNG and are prioritised for N-DOC to P-DOC support given the continuous increase of confirmed COVID-19 cases in neighbouring PNG.

### **D2. HEALTH SECTOR COMMITTEE**

- All activities reported in Situational Report No. 5 remains ongoing.

### **D3. INFRASTRUCTURE SECTOR COMMITTEE**

- All activities reported in Situational Report No. 5 remains ongoing.

### **D4. LIVELIHOOD SECTOR COMMITTEE**

- UN Women Support:
  - Through its Markets for Change Project (M4C) funded by DFAT, UN Women is considering diversion of funds to support with the redevelopment of the Kukum Market and Mobile Marketing to ensure women's economic activities to support their livelihood as well as that of public is not hindered in case of a lock down due to COVID – 19.
- All other activities reported in Situational Report No.5 remains ongoing.

### **D5. EDUCATION SECTOR COMMITTEE**

- Ministry of Education & Human Resources Development (MEHRD) PS announced resumption of schools for all exam classes (Forms 3, 5 and 6) on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2020, except for schools in Honiara, Guadalcanal Province and other high risk areas including, Munda, Noro, Gizo, Taro and Shortlands based on advice from COVID -19 Oversight Committee in consultation with MHMS. Remaining classes to be advised within two weeks after the 27<sup>th</sup> of April.
- Developed Concept Note to provide learning continuity to all students from Early Childhood Education (ECE) through to year 12 when they are in their homes and not attending formal classes. This Concept Note was shared with Development Partners and Stakeholders.
- In consultation with MEHRD Senior Management Team (SMT), N-DOC Education has established 2 N-DOC Education subcommittees. These are MEHRD Communications and MEHRD Learning Continuity Committees.
- Engaged with Development partners and Stakeholders to support learning continuity plan specific to their focus areas and level of support available.

- Drafted MEHRD Education Authority and School based baseline and Situational Assessment Report Template for COVID-19 emergency to gauge schools readiness to resume classes and identify gaps and support needed.
- Printing and distribution of COVID-19 IEC materials and guidance notes, ongoing.

## **D6. PROTECTION SECTOR COMMITTEE**

- All activities reported in Situational Report No. 5 remains ongoing.

## **D7. SAFETY AND SECURITY**

### **D7.1. ROYAL SOLOMON ISLANDS POLICE FORCE (RSIPF)**

- RSIPV Gizo departed Aola base for COVID-19 engagement on SI/PNG border operations.
- Police Response Team (PRT) deployed a total of 17 officers to support surveillance and security operations on the SI-PNG Border relating to the declaration of that location as the second declared emergency zone under the Emergency Powers (COVID-19) Regulation 2020.
- National Intelligence Department (NID)
  - Increase in number of people returning to Honiara due to resumption of schools (examinable classes) and lack of food and finance due to increase in household.
  - Ongoing congregating of people within the emergency Zone of Honiara and Guadalcanal.
  - Ongoing mobile marketing where vendors carry produces around especially with selling of betel-nut and cigarettes.
  - Satellite root crop markets have occurred in certain locations and within some private residential areas.
  - Breaches of SIG COVID-19 measures continue to occur daily and is increasing.
  - Negative reactions towards enforcement agencies is likely to occur due to frustration over COVID-19 measures especially with market vendors.
  - Issues needs to be settled amicably to avoid any insecurity in the nearby future and NID continue to follow up on these issues for new developments.

#### **D7.1.1. RSIPF PROVINCIAL RESPONSES**

##### **A. Western Province**

- Province continues on COVID-19 education awareness.
- Deployment of Gizo based officers to Shortlands as a step-up of presence on the border continues.

##### **B. Makira Province**

- Public education and awareness on COVID-19 continues.
- PPC/P-DOC has instructed officers to obtain shipping information on any ships (especially logging ships) for vessel particulars for surveillance purposes from logging camps.

##### **C. Malaita Province**

- Police conducted awareness at Purimou and Tawairoa Villages to an excess of 100 people.
- Auki police conducted awareness regarding COVID-19 and State of Emergency around the township.
- Police continues to monitor shops to ensure no price increases of goods.
- Police continues to patrol the Auki streets ensuring no illegal vendors are operating and to reduce public gatherings.

#### **D. Temotu Province**

- Joint awareness team left to conduct awareness on Duff, Santa Cruz, Utupua, Vanikoro, Tikopia and Anuta Islands.

#### **E. Central Province**

- Planned joint awareness team to conduct awareness in Russell Islands.

#### **All other Provincial Polices**

- On-going assist in the PEOCs and various P-DOC Sector Committees including the on-going COVID-19 awareness.

#### **D7.2 CORRECTIONAL SERVICES SOLOMON ISLANDS (CSSI)**

- Scoping task conducted on the Guadalcanal Beach Resort (GBR) on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April CSSI, MID and MPN&CS Infrastructure Teams as identified to be detention centre.
- Installation of hand sanitizers at CSSI premises (Gate 1, Sally Port & Gate 2) to be fully utilized.

#### **D7.3 VESSELS MONITORING WITHIN SOLOMON ISLANDS EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE (EEZ)/WATERS**

##### **A. FISHING VESSELS**

The Ministry of Fisheries has monitored a total of five (5) fishing vessels in operating within the Solomon Islands waters, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the past 20days. Three of the vessels are fishing vessels operating domestically, whilst two of the vessels are fish carrier vessels travelling into the country from two international destinations.

- **JIN TSAI FU 168** - Foreign Locally based Longline Vessel flagged in Chinese Taipei. Vessel tracked in Solomon Islands EEZ for the past 23 days. Vessel last Port of call is Noro, 11<sup>th</sup> April 2020, for unloading of fish. Expected time of arrival in Noro was on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020 for transshipment and unloading.
- **JIN TSAI FU 888** - Foreign Locally based Longline Fishing Vessel flagged to Chinese Taipei. Vessel tracked for the past 23 days, in Solomon Islands EEZ. Last Port of call is Noro, on the 27<sup>th</sup> December 2019. Expected time of arrival in Noro Port was on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020 for transshipment and unloading.
- **JIN CHIN FU 68** - Foreign Locally based Longline Fishing Vessel flagged to Chinese Taipei. Vessel's fishing tracks for the past 23 days is in Solomon Islands EEZ. Last Port of call was Noro, on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2020. Expected time of arrival in Noro Port was on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2020 for transshipment and unloading.

##### **B. CARGO VESSELS**

- **Morobe Chief** - Noro (quarantine period has ended 24/04/2020). She will then be sailing to Honiara where no clearances will be required.
- **Origin LPG gas vessel Inge Kosan** - current at anchor in Honiara - The vessel has travelled from Australia on the 14<sup>th</sup> April and come via Port Vila (no COVID-19 presence) and arrived in country on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020. After discussions with Secretary to the Prime Minister, this vessel may be boarded as soon as all Agencies are ready, as it has been effectively under quarantine for 10 days.



## **D8 SOLOMON ISLANDS RED CROSS SOCIETY (SIRC)**

- SIRC continues to actively support N-DOC Sector arrangements in both national and provincial levels by engaging in all planning process setups on COVID-19.
- Continuous engagement on COVID-19 awareness on Honiara and through its Provincial Branches.

## **D9. COORDINATION (N-DOC AND NEOC)**

- The N-DOC Arrangement remains the coordination mechanism for the SIG COVID-19 response was per the declaration and the emergency powers (COVID-19) regulation 2020.
- N-DOC maintains lead in the SIG coordination with respective N-DOC Sector Committees leading the respective sector planning and response. Similarly, this is replicated in all the Provinces including Honiara Municipality.
- NEOC remains on Full Activation mode to support N-DOC, Sector Committees, Honiara City Council and Guadalcanal Province with respective COVID-19 and TC Harold response activities.
- NEOC is also supporting N-DOC Sectors with the development of SOPs for the planned lockdown in Honiara city. The SOP defines specific tasks for essential sectors and services to be carried out during the lockdown periods.
- NEOC is supporting the development of an exercise document to test health, safety and security response capability during possible lockdown.
- NEOC is deploying a coordination/hazard risk personal and a GIS personnel in the joint SIG team to be deployed to Western and Choiseul Provinces. Team will also consist of two MID and Camp Management (IQF) team.

## **E. P-DOC SECTOR RESPONSE**

- All Provincial Governments continue to undertake preventative measures in alignment with the National Government measures to mitigate possible importation of COVID-19.
- All Provincial Disaster Operations Committee (P-DOC) remains operational with regular meetings as part of on-going preparedness.
- On-going COVID-19 awareness in all 10 Provinces including Honiara City Council.
- All 10 Provinces have identified potential Institutional Quarantine Facilities as part of their preparedness work should COVID-19 spreads to the Provinces. A joint SIG team comprising of the NEOC, MID and Camp Management will be deployed to support the P-DOC and P-DOC Camp Management Sector Committee on conducting a training on managing Institutional Quarantine Facilities. Team will first support Western and Choiseul due to the current level of risk of possible COVID-19 importation from neighbouring PNG.
- **Honiara City Council (HCC)**
  - Ongoing review of SOPs for Honiara Municipality.
  - HCC Risk Communications Team continues with awareness, distributing COVID-19 pamphlets on areas around Honiara Municipality.
  - Renovation of Kukum Market and development of Naha and White River as satellite markets is ongoing.
  - Lack of financial support is needed for immediate development support.

## **F. OTHER NATIONAL SUPPORT**

- Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce (SICCI) pledged their support to N-DOC Livelihood Committee, and their commitment to support SIG Response to COVID-19.

- SICCI will present its proposal to N-DOC for deliberation on its bid to be a member of N-DOC on a date to be confirmed this week. This is an important opportunity for both parties given the scope of SICCI and the impacts COVID-19 currently has on the business landscape.

## **G. OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES AND GAPS**

- Second batch of financial support to Provincial Disaster Committees (PDCs) and their Provincial Disaster Operations Committees (P-DOCs) yet to be disbursed subject to submission of acquittal of first batch of financial assistance.
- National testing capability not yet in place.

## **H. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- All N-DOC Sector Committees to continue updating NEOC on the implementation of their Preparedness and Response Programmes.
- Progress with urgency the N-DOC Sector Committees support all the provincial sector committees in planning, implementation and resourcing.
- Strengthening of information management, resources and tracking, reporting and monitoring of all activities implemented by N-DOC Sector Committees under the Preparedness and Response Plan.
- Prioritise and progress with urgency the establishment of the qPCR test machine and gene expert testing (COVID-19 testing facility).
- Continuation of awareness and trainings to front liners and the public on issues surrounding COVID-19.
- Continue of awareness to the public on issues relating to Stigmatizing and how this can lead to discrimination.
- Public to cooperate with Health and other Government Ministries in preparing and responding to COVID-19.
- A 3W (Who, What, Where) matrix to be circulated to all N-DOC Sectors to track activities to-date. This will be distributed today 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020.
- A donor-tracking matrix to be provided to development partners to document contributions in cash and kind. This will also be distributed today 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020.
- Western Provincial Disaster Committee (WPDC) advise both National and Provincial Government agencies plans also consider potential COVID-19 refugees from Bougainville to Western Province on a possible COVID-19 escalation in PNG.
- WPDC recommends immediate increase in the capacity of health centres on the border region to cater for front-line officers and repatriated population from urban to village.



## **I. NEXT UPDATE**

Next update will be upon availability of new information.

APPROVED FOR DISSEMINATION BY

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